

RESCH-GE 2138 Writing Empirical Research:
Education, Behavioral, Health, Humanities and Social Science Professions
Fall 2016

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Time: Tuesday 4:55-6:35

Location: Kimball Hall Room
301

Office hours: By appointment 246 Greene St, 4R. Tuesdays 10:30 – 1:00PM

Co-requisites: E10.2002 (Statistics for the Behavioral and Social Sciences), E10.2132 (Principles of Empirical Research) and E10.2180 (Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry) or equivalent.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will help students strengthen the writing competencies they need to produce quantitative and qualitative method dissertations that will convey research findings in a clear, objective style. Course content will position students to begin contributing writings in their scholarly communities. Sequenced assignments will address various writing forms and allow students feedback on their work.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. Learn how-to read their writing, as others will.
2. Recognize the importance of editing, rewriting.
3. Compose arguments and articulate ideas at the sentence and paragraph level.
4. Understand why writing often fails to convey research findings.
5. Use effective prose to convey empirical evidence.

COURSE FORMAT:

The course includes discussions, in-class workshops, out-of-class reading and writing assignments. Students are expected to complete all assignments on time and to attend all class sessions.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

A thesaurus and dictionary of your choice.

Booth, W., Colomb, G., & Williams, J. (2008). The Craft of Research. 3rd edition. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press.

Williams, J. (2015). Style: The Basic of Clarity and Grace. 5th edition. New York: Pearson Publishers.

Two recent Steinhardt dissertation will provide the basis for weekly readings, explications and discussions. One is a qualitative dissertation: Moland, Naomi (2014) *Intractable Dilemmas: Sesame Street and the quest for multiculturalism in Nigeria*. The other is a Vadiveloo, Maya (2013). *A novel scoring method to evaluate association between dietary variety and body adiposity in a national sample of U.S. Adults*.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

Aaron, Jane E. (2010). The Little-Brown Essential Handbook for Writers. (7th Edition). New York: Longman Publishers or another grammar book.

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES:

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/dissertations/>

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/dissertation-boot-camp-resources/>

<http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

<http://jovanevery.ca/15-min-writing-challenge/>

GRADING: Class is Pass/Fail

WEEKLY STUDENT LEADERS:

Each student will be responsible for a 10-minute grammar presentation and leading the class in explicating the weekly dissertation readings. Student leaders need to contact me the Friday before class to let me know how they will organize their presentations. I am available anytime on email to answer questions. Keep this presentation focused on the main issues—don't get involved in the obscure grammar points.

Keep it simple and be creative. Keep to the time limit. Make sure you engage the class during your presentation.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

We will workshop all student papers. These papers are draft assignments that you will rewrite for the following week. You must post your work on the Forum **on the due date.** You will be responsible for reading and commenting on your classmate's. Students are expected to read and post their comments on other papers on the NYU Classes Forum. I hope for lively discussions, and for each student to receive a lot of feedback on his/her work. I will read and comment on every paper.

*Double space all assignments. NO PDFs

*See "Work shopping Papers" on NYU Classes "Assignment tab

* We need line numbers to edit (line 1 line 2 etc).

1. If you have a MAC: choose "document" in the "format" menu; choose the "layout" tab; click "line numbers";click the "add line numbering" box
2. If you use Word: Go to Page Layout and click the line numbers tab.

During the workshops, one student from each writing group will be responsible for leading the discussion on student papers from his/her group.

There are **three** phases to each assignment: A posted draft, the in-class workshop, and a final copy which will be graded.

Assignments:

1. Assignment #1 Write a 250 word abstract based on your own research or writing, or re-write an abstract from someone in your field. Be prepared to justify your content and writing.

Draft: Sept 25 Post on the Forums, We will workshop on Sept. 27, Your final version to be posted on Assignments for me to read and comment is due: October 4

See Abstract exemplars on NYU Classes, Assignment tab "Assignment #1 folder." "Writing the Abstract", "The Abstract" under Assignments tab Assignment #1 folder. And, under Assignments tab, "Workshopping Papers" folder. Please read all these documents before submitting your draft work.

Required reading: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/abstracts/>
Boothe, Craft, p. 211-212.

Assignment #2a NOT GRADED. Complete the statement of purpose on the NYUClasses Forums. Due October 4

3. Assignment #2 Construct a working thesis statement or research question followed by a review of four published or unpublished studies-- two supporting and two differing from your statement or question. Make sure you synthesize this review (do not write Study #1 and summarize it.) 400-600 words

Draft: October 23 Post on Forums, Workshop: October 25, Final Post on Assignments: November 1

Required reading: Booth, Craft, p. 49-67;77-80; 87-100.

Suggested reading: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/literature-reviews/>
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/thesis-statements/>

3. Assignment #3 Use statistical tables or qualitative data set from your own research or from a dissertation or published article in your field. Tell us the research question/hypothesis (or anything else we need to know to put the data in context) then, write a summary of these research findings. Quantitative summaries need to include the table or chart, qualitative summaries need a table or brief information on the nature of the data. 400-600 words

Draft: November 13 Post on Forums, Work shop: November 15, Final: November 22 Post on Assignments

Required reading: Booth, Craft, p. 213-231.

Suggested reading: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/figures-and-charts/>

4. Assignment #4 Write a conclusion essay based on a previous paper(s) you have written during your doctoral coursework. Approximately 1000 words.

Draft: December 4th Post on Forums; Work shop: December 6, Final: December 19 Post on Assignments

Required reading: Booth, Craft, p. 244- 247.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1. September 6. Writing a dissertation. Knowing what lies ahead.

Writing competency: The canon of the sentence.

Reading:

1. "Becoming a prolific scholar" in Resources Tab, Weekly reading folder.
2. "Editing, reading and writing" in Resources Tab, Weekly reading folder.
3. "My terrible, horrible, no good, very bad dissertation" Weekly reading folder.
4. Booth Craft, "Prologue" and "Thinking in Print," p. 3-15, and "Checklist for Understanding Your Readers, p. 26-27.
5. Williams Style, Lesson One "Understanding Style" p.1-6, Lesson Two "Actions", p. 7-18.

Week 2. September 13. Writing to be read. A writing plan.

Writing competency: phrases and clauses.

Syntax: Nouns and pronouns

Reading:

1. Under Assignment Tab, Assignment #1 folder:
"Writing the Abstract"
"The Abstract"

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2. Under Assignment Tab, Workshopping Papers folder
“Workshopping Papers”
3. Read both abstracts: “Intractable Dilemmas” and “A novel scoring method”
Posted under Resources Weekly Readings
4. Booth, Craft, “Connecting with your Reader” p. 16-25; "Planning" 177-186;
Abstracts” p. 211-212; “Titles”, p. 248.
5. Williams Style, Lesson Three “Characters, p.19-25.

No writing assignment BUT

Bring a 500 -1000 word paper that you consider your best-written work next week. This assignment will not be graded, but will provide a starting point to measure your writing competency.

Week 3. September 20. Writing concise, clear research questions and statements of purpose.

Writing competency: proofreading, active and passive voice.
Syntax: Verbs (Tense, agreement).

Reading:

1. Assignment Tab. “Work shopping Papers” (review)
2. Booth, Craft, “From Topics to Questions” p. 35-48, “From Questions to Problems” p. 51-65; ; "Choosing Between Active and Passive", p. 262-264
3. Williams, Style, Lesson Four “Cohesion and Coherence” p.82-93.
4. Dissertations: Moland 1-10; Vadiveloo 8-10

Writing assignment #1 due Sept 25th: Draft of an abstract. Post on NYU Classes Forum. Read and comment on the other student’s postings—on NYU Classes.

Week 4. September 27. Work shopping abstracts.

Student Leader:

Week 5. October 4. Writing sound, convincing arguments.

Writing competency: compound, complex sentences.
Syntax: Participles, Conjunctions

Reading:

1. Booth, Craft, “Making Good Arguments,” p.105-119.
2. Williams Style, Lesson Five “Emphasis” p. 44-55.
3. Dissertations. Moland 9-20; Vadiveloo1-7.

1. Final writing assignment #1 due: Abstract. Post on NYU Classes Assignments
2. Complete the statement of purpose. Post on NYU Forum

Week 6 October 11. Writing: The difference among claims, reason and evidence.

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Writing competency: constructing time and place in a sentence.

Syntax: Commas (comma splices)

Reading:

1. Boothe, Craft, “Claims” p.120-127, “Assembling Reason and Evidence” p. 130-138
2. Dissertation Moland 54-91, Vadiveloo 59-94.
3. Suggested readings: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/evidence/>
And “Secrets—Notes on Setting Scene.docx.” On NYU Classes Weekly Readings

Week 7: October 18. Writing: Presenting quantitative/qualitative data

Writing competency: metaphors, similes.

Syntax: Adjectives (use and position in sentence)

Reading:

1. Booth, Craft, “Communicating Evidence Visually” p. 213-229, “Quote, Paraphrase and Summarize Appropriately”, p. 188-196.
2. Williams Style, Lessons Eight “Concision” p. 82-93.
3. Dissertation: Moland 98-175; Vadiveloo 96-128

Writing assignment #2: Draft of Thesis/Question and literature review due October 23rd.
Post on NYU Classes Forum

Week 8: October 25 Work shopping Thesis/Question and literature review.

Student Leaders:

Week 9: November 1 Outlining and Revising.

Writing competency: transitions, “opening attack” sentences, Clichés, Idiomatic expressions.

Syntax: Adverbs (use and position in sentences)

Reading:

1. "Revising Your Dissertation," "Final Draft checklist" and "Words and Phases to avoid" In Resources tab, Weekly reading folder.
2. Boothe, Craft, “Revising Your Organization and Argument” p. 203-210, “Revising Style: Telling Your Story Clearly” p.249-269, also 182-184 (review).
3. Williams Style, Lessons Nine “Shape” p.94-113
4. Dissertation- Moland 288-356; Vadiveloo 130-150.

Final writing assignment #2 due: Thesis/Question and literature review

Week 10: November 8 Framing a discussion, summary and conclusion.

Building the sections of a paper: organization, constructing the end of an essay.

1. Boothe, Craft, "Introductions and Conclusions", p.232-248
2. Williams Style, Lessons Seven "Global Coherence" p.70-81; , Lesson Six "Motivation,56-69. Review pg 68-69.
3. Norman "Nurses In War: A Study Of Female Military Nurses Who Served In Vietnam During The War Years 1965-1973." Chps1;5 (16 pages) PDF on Weekly Readings NYU Classes.
4. Dissertation Moland 363-395; Vadiveloo 170-181.

Writing assignment #3 due November 13th: Draft summary of research findings.

Week 11. November 15. Work shopping summary of research findings
Student Leaders

Week 12: November 22. The Ethics of Writing

1. Boothe, Craft, "The Ethics of Research", p.273-276.
2. Williams Style, Lessons Ten "The Ethics of Style" p. 131-150
3. Resources Tab, Weekly readings: Plagiarism UNC –The Writing Center.pdf," "Plagiarism 2011 AJPH.pdf"

Final writing assignment #3 due: Summary of research findings

Week 13. November 29 Individual meetings.

Writing assignment #4 due December 4th: Draft of conclusion essay. Post on Forums.

Week 15. December 5 Work shopping conclusion essay
Student Leaders

Final Assignment Due: December 19th. Post on NYU Classes- Assignments.

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